

"WE are always, as it were, looking up a train in last year's Bradshaw." Mr. Harold Macmillan used this quip in his Budget speech to illustrate the ancient vintage of some of our economic statistics. Now he is turning his mind to the reorganisation of the Treasury machine.

The changes will involve new men—recruited outside the



SIR OLIVER FRANKS

Treasury—as well as new methods. There is talk of an "Economic Chief of Staff," although the actual title would certainly be less imposing. As Mr. Macmillan has said, when "one gets older one gets a little shy about these high-sounding nomenclatures."

The man most likely to be offered this key post is Sir Oliver Franks. Sir Oliver's qualities do not have a universal appeal—Sir Winston Churchill was not attracted by his austere, passionless mind—but he stands out, in any company, by the force and precision of his intellect.

Rolling Stone

At thirty-two he became Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow University. At the end of the war he was Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Supply. Later, on leave from his duties as Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, he was the principal guiding force in the establishment of O.E.E.C. He was an outstandingly successful Ambassador in Washington. Now he is Chairman of Lloyds Bank. Sir Oliver is still only fifty-one and he regards himself as something of a rolling stone.

Mr. Macmillan and Sir Oliver would work well together. Both men know and admire the American economy. Both men know and admire the statistical service which keeps the American Government in touch with the economic life of the country. Both men like "to think big," and Sir Oliver is a strong supporter of Mr. Macmillan's Budget. I should not be surprised if Sir Oliver rolls back into Whitehall—as always, at the top.

Russian Golf

MESSRS. BULGANIN AND KHRUSHCHEV have certainly heard of golf, if only because of President Eisenhower's predilection for the

game, but I do not think that they have actually laid eyes on a golf club before their visit to New College.

Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart tells me that in Tsarist days there was a golf course of sorts outside St. Petersburg, while Moscow boasted of a pitch-and-putt practice field. Since the Revolution, however, rilibicks have been as scarce as Grand Dukes.

The Soviet leaders might not have been introduced to the Royal and Ancient game if they had not arrived at New College ahead of schedule during their tour of Oxford. The Warden (having, as Vice-Chancellor, gone to Christ Church, which they were supposed to visit—until security officers found a gun charged with fireworks in Tom Quad) was not ready to receive them, and to cover this hiatus Sir William Hayter bore them off to his old rooms, where a full set of wood and iron clubs provided a welcome subject for elucidation.

A Plane-tree Transplanted

MR. C. S. FORESTER was in London last week in connection with the film which is about to be made of his early best-seller "The Gun."

The great story-teller gets up his material as carefully as any Ph.D. student, and I had always supposed that the theme of "The Gun" had been taken direct from some authentic record of the Peninsular War. But it was from somewhere much nearer home, I understand, that Mr. Forester took the core of his subject.

The partisans who drag their mammoth piece of artillery across Spain haul and tug with the motions of a gang of men whom Mr. Forester once watched at work in a London square. It was while watching them manoeuvre the trunk of a fallen plane-tree that he formed the idea of a more heroic removal.

I wish that the men who dig up the road in front of my window were equally inspiring.

Nib and Willow

HAVING once seen Mr. J. B. Priestley battling at one end and Mr. V. S. Pritchett at the other, I would not go so far as to say that men of letters absolutely cannot play cricket.

The elements of rustic farce or Ealing comedy have however been known to infect even the relatively august match which is held annually between the Authors XI and the National Book League (Clifford Bax, while umpiring, was once so deep in conversation with his fellow-umpire, C. B. Fry, that he got in the way of the ball and had to be helped off the field.)

Not so this year: for although authors remain, for the most

part, bad cricketers, good cricketers are more and more prone to write. I hear from the

June 20, is the tenth of the series.

Winged Wordsman

I CAN think of one person, at any rate, for whom the Authors XI includes two ex-captains of England (Hutton and Jardine) and one ex-captain of Australia (Arthur Morris). The match, which will be held in Vincent Square on

they were at table and to translate the exchanges, winged or otherwise, which came his way. Despite his heavy black beard and encumbering spectacles he has a look of benevolent animation—and doubtless needed it, at times.

He has had plenty of practice in such matters. Few men, indeed, have spent so much time

in Russia since the war, and fewer still have travelled as widely and resolutely within its frontiers. Close attention to the thoughts of others has never prevented him from having thoughts of his own, and those who have occasion to consult him on some detail of Soviet life are likely to find that the stream of apposite and well-ordered information is interrupted by a convulsion of infectious laughter. Mr. Orchard is still a young man, but I was not surprised to learn that he is held in affectionate respect by his charges.

Aly on Tour

THE Aly Khan is now nearing the end of an extensive tour of the powerful Ismaili communities in Africa, and the fact that he has forsaken his normal haunts to undertake this trip is being interpreted by the faithful as a sure sign that he will definitely be chosen to succeed his father, the Aga Khan, as the spiritual ruler and temporal leader of the 10 million members of the Ismaili sect of Islam.

In British East Africa the wealth and influence of the Ismaili communities are particularly strong; and the Aga Khan has deservedly been called "the most powerful man in modern Africa." He has invariably used his influence there to maintain stability. He has just given fresh evidence of his power by sending an emissary to quell the serious constitutional fracas in Zanzibar after all British efforts had failed.

Pearson in Person

THE Soviet Union could not be numbered among the admirers of N.A.T.O., and I am surprised to hear that the Canadian Government has asked that Mr. Gromyko should be invited to hear Mr. Lester Pearson's address on the subject of N.A.T.O. at the Central Hall, Westminster, tomorrow evening.

"Mike" Pearson has been Canada's Secretary of State ever since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed seven years ago. Last October he flew to Moscow, where he was "much shaken" by signs of Soviet strength. Colleagues of his have observed that he is "not a man who shakes easily." Since that visit he has been even more outspoken in his call for flexibility and emphasis on the economic side of N.A.T.O.: his speech on Monday on an English-Speaking Union platform may well be a minor explosion.

St. George & the Still-life

IT was an excellent idea on the part of the Piccadilly & St. James's Association to commemorate St. George's Day by special window displays of oil paintings on the theme of "This England"; and in many instances these did much to add to the gaiety of the two famous thoroughfares.

I did notice, however, one or two works (a Cézanne still-life, for instance, and a "Nativity" by Benedetto Rambini which

it would be difficult to regard as manifestations of patriotic feeling. Nor did many shopkeepers attempt to gear their exhibits to their own speciality. Miss Pat Smythe sits (by right, after all) in Swaine, Adeney's window; but I missed "Love Locked Out" where they surely should be: in Messrs. Chubb's.

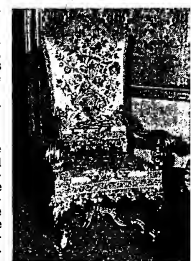
Needle and Thread

THERE is no doubt about the success of this year's Royal School of Needlework's exhibition. Some part of this may be due to its being held at Marlborough House, where the beauty and majesty of the State Rooms can only occasionally be glimpsed by the public.

Needlework is a pursuit at which men often excel. The most accomplished needleman known to me is a general, now in retirement, who has been known to go back to the Minster era for the basis of his art. I was interested to see that the Duke of Gloucester is showing, in the Green Drawing Room at Marlborough House, a stool of more orthodox design, worked by himself between the years 1936 and 1938.

The organisers have had the whole of English history, and of English patronage, on which to draw. There is, for instance, a red cope which was worn at

Charles II's coronation, a Tudor panel-picture from Chatsworth and a pair of strikingly fine Italian chairs, one of which I reproduce here, from Lord Rosebery's collection. Most touching of all, perhaps, is the



THE NEEDLER'S ART

green velvet hanging worked by Mary, Queen of Scots, during her imprisonment.

Metaphors of the Week

"THE telephone is too good a help to cantilever responsibility—the principle whereby everyone leans on everyone else."—Viscount Chandos, at the luncheon of the Electrical Development Association.

"I am no extinct volcano."—Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, M.P. on the same occasion.